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tion of a system in which Mr. Fisher, once a product, is now a most important producer. Finally, the book comes as a welcome evidence that concentration upon a single comparatively limited period is not necessarily essential to the best historical work, and that it is at least possible, despite many examples to the contrary, for a man to make more than one or even two fields of history sufficiently his own to be able to write with authority upon them all.

ROGER BIGELOW MERRIMAN.

A History of the Inquisition of Spain. Volume IV. By HENRY CHARLES LEA, LL.D. (New York and London: The Macmillan Company. 1907. Pp. xii, 619.)

History of Sacerdotal Celibacy in the Christian Church. In two volumes. [Third edition, revised.] By HENRY CHARLES LEA, LL.D. (New York: The Macmillan Company. 1907. Pp. xvi, 481; x, 412.)

THE last of the four volumes of Mr. Lea's *Inquisition of Spain* appeared in October. It continues his account of the Inquisition's varied spheres of action. What he has to tell of its dealings with Mysticism is already known in large part from his pages on that subject in his *Chapters from the Religious History of Spain*; but it is here revised in the light of further study, and is enriched by considerable excursions into the story of the Church's treatment of Mysticism in Italy and in France. There follows a long chapter on the unsavory subject of the Inquisition's relations with solicitation, another on its dealings with "propositions", or heretical utterances, and one on its treatment of sorcery and occult arts, showing clearly how, by taking seriously such superstitions and laying stress on their diabolic character and supernatural efficacy, the tribunal popularized and perpetuated them.

Strikingly in contrast with this Mr. Lea finds the Inquisition's treatment of witchcraft—for witchcraft, he reminds us, though the culmination of sorcery, was not the same. "The witch has abandoned Christianity, has renounced her baptism, has worshipped Satan as her God, has surrendered herself to him, body and soul, and exists only to be his instrument in working the evil to her fellow creatures which he cannot accomplish without a human agent." This mad delusion, whose rise Mr. Lea dates from the middle of the fourteenth century, and which fills with horror the annals of Christendom during the three or four centuries following, was, in Mr. Lea's opinion, as in that of most other students of the subject, "essentially a disease of the imagination, created and stimulated by the persecution of witchcraft". Now, no land seemed more exposed to the contagion of this epidemic than Spain; nor have the historians of witchcraft recorded her exemption from its ravages. But Mr. Lea demonstrates that in Spain they were far less than in most other Christian lands; and that the mania was "repressed and

rendered comparatively harmless" he thinks "due to the wisdom and firmness of the Inquisition". This could be done because the Inquisition soon won for itself exclusive jurisdiction in such cases. It *was* done, because in the supreme council of the Inquisition there were found a few men rational enough to have doubts, safe enough to dare to utter them and powerful enough to make them effective. As early as 1526 a half-dozen searching questions regarding the matter were submitted to a select "congregation" of ten; and their advice, though halting, inclined decidedly to caution and good sense. This policy of serious inquiry once entered on, enlightenment was sure to grow; and in 1612 a report submitted by a commissioner charged with the investigation of an outbreak of the panic in Navarre seems to have completed the Inquisition's disillusionment. From this time forward, while not denying the existence of witchcraft or modifying the penalties for the crime, it succeeded, by discouraging accusations and rejecting what elsewhere passed for proofs, in practically dispelling the insanity from the popular mind. What was not less, its influence seems to have been felt, though somewhat slowly, by its neighbor, the Inquisition in Italy, whose procedure, based largely on the Spanish, was similarly effective in dispelling the superstition. And all this despite the continued pressure of the theologians and the unwavering credulity of the popes. These interesting conclusions of Mr. Lea may be commended to the thoughtful study of those of his countrymen who still condone the witch-hunting of our ancestors, in Europe or in America, by making it but the fault of their age. There is reason to doubt whether for the faults of our age we are wholly guiltless; but the fact is that, throughout the witch period, skepticism, however timid, was always and everywhere abundant, and that credulity and cruelty, however intelligible, were culpable then if now.

But, if this be Mr. Lea's most surprising chapter, more widely interesting to historians is likely to be that in which he discusses the political activity of the Spanish Inquisition. That the Inquisition was primarily an institution of the state, and not of the Church, as apologists have so long maintained and historians too often admitted, he emphatically denies. The theory that it was the product of the rise of absolutism in Spain is, he declares, "wholly fallacious". True, "a tribunal whose undefined powers and secrecy of action fitted it so perfectly for use as a political agent could scarce exist for centuries without occasionally being called upon"; but the notable thing is "that it was so rarely employed and that the objects for its intervention were usually so trivial". Even the case of Pérez, which Mr. Lea relates with notable fullness and clearness, shows the Holy Office called in only as a last resort, and then proving itself more concerned to advance its own interests than to be the obsequious instrument of the royal will.

There follow chapters on the Inquisition's treatment of Jansenism, of Freemasonry, of Philosophism, of bigamy, of blasphemy, besides a

chapter of miscellanies—its bearing toward marriage in orders, personation of priesthood or of officialdom, demoniacal possession, insults to images, the worship of uncanonized saints, unnatural crime, lending at interest, betrayals of confession; then, in conclusion, a chapter on its decadence in Spain, from the culmination of its power, under Philip IV., to its final extinction by royal decree in 1834, and a chapter of retrospect, which reiterates and reinforces Mr. Lea's conviction that the Inquisition was, on the whole, a curse to Spain, crushing liberty and thought, putting orthodoxy above character, and substituting stagnation for progress. Yet he reminds his readers that the effort to enforce unity of belief, in the conviction that it is essential to human happiness here and hereafter, has been shared by nearly all Christian bodies; and he concludes that "after all, the great lesson taught by the history of the Inquisition is that the attempt of man to control the conscience of his fellows reacts upon himself".

Though this is Mr. Lea's last volume on the Inquisition in Spain, it is happily not his last on the Spanish Inquisition: it is to be followed by a volume, announced for early issue, on the Inquisition in the Spanish dependencies. And there is good hope that even this is not to be our last gift from his untiring pen.

Even while busy upon the proofs of his history of the Inquisition he found time for another task. A new edition of his *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy* left his hand in March last and was published in the autumn. It has been a classic since first it saw the light in 1867, and even the revision of 1884 has long been out of print. The third edition is again a revision and an enlargement. That two volumes now take the place of one is partly due to the larger type; but careful comparison shows that the added matter fills full fifty of their pages. There is no rearrangement of the work, and in its pre-Reformation portion the changes are very slight—here and there the addition of an authority, the excision of a phrase, the insertion of an episode, the recasting of a sentence. With the chapter on the Reformation in Germany begins more serious modification; that on the Council of Trent is notably enriched; that on the post-Tridentine Church is not only much revised, but its pages on the abuse of the confessional, swollen to thrice their bulk, are made a separate chapter under the title of Solicitation; into that on the Church and the Revolution is inserted a paragraph on the marriage of Talleyrand; and the closing chapter, on the Church of to-day, while not greatly enlarged, is in many places rewritten.

GEORGE L. BURR.